Report of the Medical Officer of Health
--for the year 1900--

To the Chairman and Members of the
Seaton Urban District Council

Gentlemen

During the past year there have been 24 births, equal to a birth-rate of 18·4 per thousand. There have been 14 deaths. Two of these were visitors. Excluding these two we have a death-rate of 9·2 per thousand of the resident population. The average death-rate for the past 10 years is 13·1, so that for the third successive year we are well below it.

Of the 12 deaths there were none under 30 years of age, with the exception of that of an infant prematurely born and who only lived 30 minutes. Eight were between 32 and 62--- Six of these were from ordinary causes and two from Phthisis. The remaining three deaths were over 70---

I have only had 5 notifications. Four of these Erysipelas and one Diphtheria---

The death from Diphtheria was the child of a visitor, and the circumstances were fully explained in my Report of September, ~~and~~ I have to thank the Council for the prompt way in which they supported my efforts to thoroughly disinfect the premises, and the clothing of the deceased. No other case has been notified in the district---

This case reminds me that we have no provision for Isolation. So far it has been

but--

but little needed, but we are always liable to an outbreak of infectious disease, and should such occur during the summer months, the consequences would be so serious to a place like Seaton, that I would urge you to consider how best to guard against it. A Cottage, in a suitable place, with two or three beds available for emergencies, might enable us to nip in the bud what might otherwise assume formidable proportions----

All the nuisances reported during the year have been remedied, except the over-crowding of the tenement-part of No 2 Woodbine Place—occupied by George Leach, his wife and family. Details of this case were given in my July Report. I must repeat that it is a condition that should be terminated as soon as possible.

Two old standing causes of complaint have ceased to exist. The Town Refuse Heap has been carted away and a more suitable place for deposit acquired at a greater distance from the houses. The pigs have been removed from Mr Boalch's orchard and I have had no complaint this year from the visitors to the cricket fields---

The Dairies were inspected in June and were found generally satisfactory. The suggestions made with regard to the Cow-sheds have been carried out.

The Slaughter-houses are inspected quarterly and are kept clean, and lime-washed---

There has been an abundant supply of pure water to most parts, though complaints were again made, in August, of the interrupted

supply-

supply to a few houses on the highest level. These complaints are of annual occurrence, and the Council is still considering how best to meet them. The total quantity of water used during the year was 14.200.000 gallons equivalent to 22 gallons per head per day. It was 30 gallons the previous year, but the total is less by 200.000 gallons. This is accounted for by the smaller quantity used for street watering, and to some extent, by the abatement of waste.— I have had several inquiries from intending visitors as to the hardness of our water. Analysis shows that it contains 17 grains to the gallon of "Calcic Carbonate". This is double the quantity it should contain to enable it to be classed as a soft water. On the other hand it is of the same degree of hardness as the Thames water, and considerably less than much of that supplied in Kent and the North of England.

In conclusion I can again congratulate the Council on the good health of the district. The very low deathrate, one death only amongst infants and children, and one only from zymotic disease are good testimony to the efficiency of the sanitary arrangements. In the Devon County Council's "Summary of the Reports of Medical Officers of Health for South Devon for 1899" it is stated with reference to Seaton "Of course this diminutive population shows wide fluctuations, but still deserves full credit for occupying the first place in Table I two years in succession. It has the lowest deathrate, no zymotic or infantile rates, and in Table IV has by far the best figures."

J.

I quite expect that in the Summary for 1900 we shall occupy an equally favourable position.

I am Gentlemen
Your Obedient Servant
H. A. Pattinson
Medical Officer of Health

Seaton 26th January 1901.

Copy.
Annual Report
of the M.O.H
for the year 1900